

REPLY

Serial No. 09/954,586  
Atty. Docket No. GP116-03.UT

**Amendments to the Specification**

**Please amend the paragraph at page 31, lines 10-22, as follows:**

Parameters affecting probe hybridization, such as  $T_m$ , complementarity and secondary structure of the target sequence, also affect amplification primer hybridization and therefore performance of the amplification primers. The degree of non-specific extension (primer-dimer or non-target copying) can also affect amplification efficiency. Thus, amplification primers are selected to have low self-complementarity or cross-complementarity, particularly at the 3' ends of their sequences. Notwithstanding, we note that the "signal primers" described *infra* could be modified to include regions of self-complementarity, thereby transforming them into "Molecular Torch" or "Molecular Beacon" signal primers, such as these terms are defined below. Lengthy homopolymer runs and high GC content are avoided to reduce spurious primer extension. Computer programs are available to aid in this aspect of the design, including Oligo Tech® analysis software which is available from Oligo Therapeutics, Inc. and can be accessed on the World Wide Web at the following URL: ~~http://www.oligosetc.com/OligoTech.html~~ www.oligosetc.com/OligoTech.html using a hypertext transfer protocol (http) in the URL.